

Students as Scholars Program Rubric

Mason's *Students as Scholars* initiative aims to improve student success through increased participation in and celebration of undergraduate research and creative activities. *Students as Scholars* helps to create inquiry-driven curriculum and independent scholarly experiences for all students to:

1. Understand the value of knowledge and how it is generated and communicated. (Discovery Outcome)
2. Engage in elements of scholarly inquiry. (Scholarly Inquiry Outcome)
3. Create an original scholarly project and communicate knowledge from the scholarly or creative project. (Research and Scholarship Intensive Outcome)

These outcomes are intended to be inclusive of all academic disciplines at Mason, and supportive of student development. The learning outcomes are organized to promote increasing levels of engagement with the process of scholarship, and increasing autonomy as students develop competence as scholars in their fields. The rubric identifies target levels of development for each learning outcome, shaping expectations for the developmental nature of collegiate learning.

The rubric does not assume a prescriptive or linear order of inquiry; rather, it recognizes that the process of discovery differs by scholarly field or project. While the scholarly questions, contexts, methods, and modes of communication vary, all undergraduate research and creative experiences must emphasize the iterative nature of discovery and constant attention to the process of inquiry at all levels and stages of the process.

Using the Rubric

The *Students as Scholars Program Rubric* can be used to: guide program development at the institutional as well as degree program levels; measure student achievement of learning outcomes across learning experiences; and contribute to the improvement of teaching and learning through faculty development activities.

Students as Scholars encourages faculty to adapt the rubric to use in ways that are relevant to courses and educational programs in their unique academic and professional fields. The rubric can be used to guide course and curriculum development by determining the level of student scholarly development as they enter a course, and the goals for students as they complete a course. Faculty can design learning activities that align with the student learning outcomes. The program rubric also can be adapted for evaluation of individual student research activities and products.

Suggested Citation

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Students as Scholars Program Rubric

Students as Scholars
Student Learning
Outcomes

Level of Student Scholarly Development

	Exceptional	Proficient (RS)	Approaching Proficiency (Inquiry)	Emerging Proficiency	Novice
CORE <i>Articulate and refine a question, problem, or challenge.</i>	Articulate and refine a novel, focused, and manageable question, problem or challenge that has the strong potential to contribute to the field.	Articulate and refine a focused and manageable question, problem, or challenge that may contribute to the field.	Articulate a question, problem, or challenge that is generally relevant and appropriate in scope.	Articulate a question, problem, or challenge that is too narrow or general to be addressed appropriately in a scholarly project.	Not yet able to articulate an appropriate scholarly question, problem, or challenge.
DISCOVERY <i>Distinguish between personal beliefs and evidence.</i>	Make accurate and nuanced distinctions among personal beliefs, opinions, claims and evidence.	Consistently make accurate distinctions among personal beliefs, opinions, claims and evidence.	Occasionally make accurate distinctions among personal beliefs, opinions, claims and evidence.	Begin to make distinctions among personal beliefs, opinions, claims and evidence.	Not yet able to recognize that there is a distinction among personal beliefs, opinion, claims, and evidence.
ETHICS <i>Identify relevant ethical issues and follow ethical principles.</i>	Identify and address a range of nuanced ethical issues throughout the inquiry process.	Consistently identify relevant ethical issues; demonstrates attention to ethical principles at all stages of the inquiry process.	Identify some relevant ethical issues; demonstrates some attention to ethical principles at some stages of the inquiry process.	Begin to identify relevant ethical issues; demonstrates limited attention to ethical principles at any stage of the inquiry process.	Not yet able to identify relevant ethical issues.
METHOD <i>Choose an appropriate research method for scholarly inquiry.</i>	Choose or create sophisticated and effective methods for exploring an inquiry, and identify and responsibly address advantages and limitations of different methods.	Consistently choose effective methods for exploring an inquiry, and address advantages and limitations of those methods.	Sometimes choose effective methods for exploring an inquiry.	Be aware of some appropriate research methods, and begin to identify effective methods for exploring an inquiry.	Not yet aware of appropriate research methods for scholarly inquiry.
METHOD <i>Gather and evaluate evidence appropriate to the inquiry.</i>	Acquire high-quality information or data using sophisticated strategies; use nuanced criteria to judge the credibility of the evidence.	Acquire information or data using effective, well-designed strategies; consistently use appropriate criteria to judge the credibility of the evidence.	Acquire information or data using appropriate strategies; sometimes able to judge the credibility of the evidence.	Begin to recognize and apply appropriate strategies for gathering and evaluating information or data.	Not yet able to gather or evaluate evidence appropriate to the inquiry.
METHOD <i>Appropriately analyze scholarly evidence.</i>	Provide sophisticated analysis or synthesis of new and previous evidence to make original, insightful contributions to knowledge.	Consistently analyze or synthesize new and previous evidence to make important contributions to knowledge.	Analyze or synthesize new and/or previous evidence appropriate to the inquiry.	Demonstrate a limited ability to analyze or synthesize evidence.	Not yet able to analyze or synthesize information or data.

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	Exceptional	Proficient (RS)	Approaching Proficiency (Inquiry)	Emerging Proficiency	Novice
<p>CONTEXT <i>Explain how scholarly inquiry has value to society.</i></p>	<p>Articulate a nuanced understanding of the value of research and creative inquiry to individuals and communities in local, civic, professional, and global contexts. Astutely identify and explain broad implications of, and questions raised by, the project.</p>	<p>Articulate an understanding of the value of research and creative inquiry to individuals and communities in local, civic, professional, or global contexts. Consistently identify and explain implications of, and questions raised by, the project.</p>	<p>Articulate a general understanding of the value of research and creative inquiry to individuals and communities in local, civic, professional, or global contexts. Identify some implications of, and questions raised by, the project.</p>	<p>Begin to articulate the value of research and creative inquiry to individuals or communities in some local, civic, professional, or global contexts.</p>	<p>Not yet able to explain the value of scholarly inquiry to society.</p>
<p>CONTEXT <i>Explain how knowledge is situated and shared in relevant scholarly contexts.</i></p>	<p>Explain multiple and innovative pathways for dissemination of scholarship. Place the inquiry within a comprehensive scholarly context. Make insightful connections between, and acknowledge limitations in, own and others' work.</p>	<p>Explain relevant pathways for dissemination of scholarship. Consistently place the inquiry within a scholarly context and be able to make explicit connections between own and others' work.</p>	<p>Explain general pathways for dissemination of scholarship. Place the inquiry within a scholarly context and be able to make some connections between own and others' work.</p>	<p>Begin to articulate how scholarly knowledge is disseminated. Begin to make some connections between own and others' work.</p>	<p>Not yet able to explain how scholarly knowledge is disseminated.</p>
<p>CREATION <i>Take responsibility for creating and executing an original scholarly or creative project.</i></p>	<p>Independently design a project that makes original contributions to knowledge, make sophisticated modifications to research or design strategies as the project progresses, and successfully complete the project.</p>	<p>In consultation with a faculty mentor, design a project that has the potential to make contributions to knowledge, appropriately adapt research or design strategies as the project progresses, and complete the project.</p>	<p>Under the direction of a faculty mentor, design and execute a project plan.</p>	<p>With substantial faculty oversight, design and execute some elements of a project plan.</p>	<p>Not yet able to design or execute a plan for a scholarly project.</p>
<p>COMMUNICATION <i>Communicate knowledge from an original scholarly or creative project.</i></p>	<p>Communicate - with clarity, accuracy, and fluency - the results of a scholarly or creative project through publishing, presenting or performing, employing highly-effective conventions appropriate to the audience and context.</p>	<p>Clearly communicate the results of a scholarly or creative project through publishing, presenting or performing, consistently employing conventions appropriate to the audience and context.</p>	<p>Communicate knowledge from scholarly or creative project through writing, presenting, or performing, employing some conventions appropriate to the audience and context.</p>	<p>Begin to communicate about a scholarly or creative project through writing, presenting, or performing, with some awareness of the audience and context.</p>	<p>Not yet able to communicate knowledge from a scholarly or creative project.</p>